

Message from the EMSIP Chief

Summer is here and it is again time to focus on how we, as EMS providers, can collaborate on injury prevention initiatives. I contacted Dan Galanis, Epidemiologist, of our Injury Prevention program to provide some information regarding injuries in Hawaii. I want to share the information because I believe every day you can use the message of injury prevention as part of your medical treatment modalities.

Injuries are the leading cause of death in Hawaii for people aged 1 to 45 years. In fact, injuries account for nearly as many deaths among these ages as all other diseases combined. Injuries also appear to be a persistent public health problem, in that there has been little apparent change in the rate of fatal injuries in Hawaii over the last 10 years, with the possible exception of deaths among motor vehicle occupants. **Seat Belts and EMS have made a difference.** Maybe the physicians too!

In Hawaii, for every one person that dies from an injury, there are an estimated 17 who are hospitalized and perhaps as many as 250 more who are seen in emergency departments, including about 10% who are transported via ambulance. Thus, although fatal injuries are obviously the most severe, the vast majority of injuries are non-fatal and in some respects these have much greater implications.

Injuries are also costly. Apart from the pain and suffering endured by the victims and their families, injury-related hospitalizations result in almost \$170 million in hospital charges per year in Hawaii. This is an underestimation of the actual cost of injury-related hospitalizations, however, as it does not include physician charges.

The table below shows that the leading causes of injury differ somewhat, depending on the source of data. Falls were the leading cause of injuries requiring hospitalization, and the second leading cause of ambulance-attended injuries, but were less prevalent among fatal injuries. Conversely, drownings were more common among the fatal injuries than ambulance-attended injuries or those requiring hospitalization. Car crashes and assaults were important causes of injuries at all levels. Suicides accounted for nearly one-quarter



of fatal injuries, making this the single leading cause. Suicides and suicide attempts also accounted for about 16% of injury-related hospitalizations.

To all of you that have embraced prevention into your patient interactions and community networking I wish to express my appreciation. We can show EMS makes a difference.

Mahalo,

Donna Maiava, Chief
Emergency Medical Services and Injury Prevention



Top ten causes of injuries by the three major injury data sources in Hawaii

Death Certificates			Hospital Admission Records			EMS Ambulance Reports		
Cause	%	# ¹	Cause	%	# ²	Cause	%	# ³
1. Suicide	24	136	Falls	33	3224	Car Occupant	40	7695
2. Car Occupant	13	77	Suicide	16	1516	Falls	19	3664
3. Falls	11	65	Car Occupant	15	1479	Assault	19	3634
4. Drowning	10	60	Striking Injury	5	449	Pedestrian	5	936
5. Homicide	7	39	Assault	4	434	Motorcyclist	4	787
6. Poisoning	6	36	Poisoning	4	362	Suicide	4	766
7. Pedestrian	5	29	Motorcyclist	3	305	Poisoning	2	383
8. Motorcyclist	3	18	Pedestrian	3	268	Bicyclist	2	297
9. Suffocation	3	16	Bicyclist	2	236	Choking	1	255
10. Other	2	15	Drowning	2	233	Drowning	1	185

¹ Annual number of deaths, from 1996-2000 death certificates.

² Annual number of injury-related hospitalizations, from 1997-2001 records. Since only 56% of these records contain external cause codes, these estimates are extrapolated from the known number of hospitalizations. Includes cause-specific estimates for admissions at Queen's, using Queen's trauma registry data.

³ Annual number of ambulance-attended injuries, from 1995-98 records. Since Oahu EMS records contain more detailed injury information, state totals were estimated using the Oahu distribution of injuries.

Take a Moment, Save a Lifetime

An eight-month old infant is found lifeless in the bathtub under the watchful eye of her two-year old sibling. Her Dad stepped away for just a moment. A fifty-year-old visitor is missing while swimming and is later found submerged and lifeless.

Sadly, the weekly headlines in Hawaii often read as above, and all of us, from the layperson, to the first responders, to the ED physician, and to the office practitioner, all lament their sad tales. According to published statistics, drowning is the leading cause of fatal injuries in 0-14 year olds, accounting for 14% of deaths in that age group. One-third of these deaths is in the ocean, another one-third in swimming pools, with the remainder in bathtubs, rivers, and other areas. Age matters, as younger kids are vulnerable in bathtubs and pools, while adolescents are at risk in the ocean and in rivers. From 1995-1998, there were 148 ambulance-attended near-drownings in children under 18 years of age on Oahu alone. On average, about 35 children under 18 years of age are hospitalized for near-drownings in the state.

Interestingly, like the blind men describing different parts of the elephant, we each have a different response to these deaths and how to best deal with them. An emerging trend in finding common ground to analyze such problems is to consider a *continuum of risk*. For any individual, in a given setting, there is a range of risk for injury or death. By considering the variables that contribute to greater or lesser safety, we can best advise on how to prevent injuries and deaths.

As an example, age is a variable that contributes by virtue of differences in physical capacity, judgment, curiosity, impulsivity, and so forth. The physical environment, including the proximity to water, protective fencing, and an escape route, would be another factor. Supervision by competent adults or rescuers and their diligent acts would be yet a third factor. By becoming more knowledgeable about the different factors that influence safety in different circumstances we can all be more influential.

Each of us has the opportunity to utilize the “teachable moments” that occur during our interactions with the public. As a pediatrician, I have the chance to talk about safety issues during well baby and child visits. There are many resources available in that regard, including the American Academy of Pediatrics’ TIPP program, which provides counseling protocols and written materials. Water safety personnel have the most frequent and visible opportunity to advise and intervene before a beachgoer gets in trouble.

We all have the opportunity to influence public policy with respect to water safety. As those directly involved in health and safety, we have the experience and credibility to advise legislators and government policy makers to implement safer beach park and pool safety measures.

There can never be a completely safe world. Risk is inherent in all everyday activities and can be part of the attraction

to sports we participate in. Our task is to clearly identify and minimize those risks to acceptable levels, especially for our keiki, who are not in a position to do that for themselves.

Accordingly, KIPC/SAFE KIDS Hawaii again hosted Safe Keiki Day, a free safety fair, on May 1 at Toys ‘R Us. In line with the national theme, “Splash Into Safety”, the event focused on providing parents, caregivers, and keiki the opportunity to learn more about water safety and injury prevention through interactive games and displays.

Ralph Goto, Ocean Safety and Lifeguard Services Administrator, ensured that all the important areas of water safety was covered at this event, as well as throughout the week, through a series of water safety events at various Oahu locales.

KIPC/SAFE KIDS Hawaii acknowledges those committed to our island keiki. Mahalos go out to the EMS personnel and first responders who answered the call for this event:

Danny Kao, an EMT from American Medical Response Hawaii, **Jimmy Barros**, Ocean Safety’s Injury Prevention Coordinator, and HFD’s **Bill Beimes**, **Brett Lomont**, **Clay Madrona**, and the **First Watch of Rescue 2**. The event was a success, thanks to your hard work and dedication to injury prevention.

Contributed by Kenn Saruwatari, M.D., KIPC Board of Directors, and Therese Argoud, Childhood Injury Prevention Coordinator, the Department of Health Injury Prevention and Control Program.

Did you know?

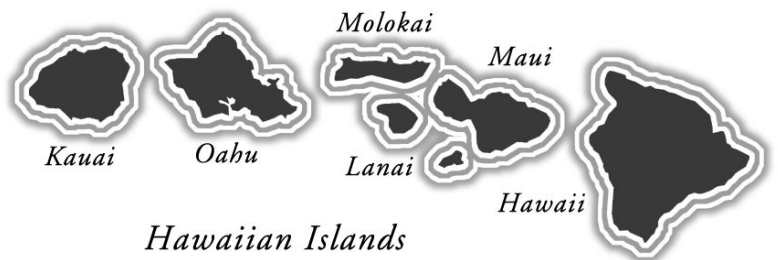
Young children are at greater risk of drowning in pools and bathtubs, while youth are at greater risk in open bodies of water (i.e., the ocean and rivers)

Drowning rates are higher for the neighbor islands (more ocean deaths, fewer pools and lifeguards)

During a three year period (1995-1998), there were 148 ambulance attended near drownings of children under 18 on Oahu alone

Data compiled by the Injury Prevention and Control Program, Department of Health, for the Keiki Injury Prevention Action Plan 2002, “Protecting Our Children: Strategies for Injury Prevention.”

Answering the Call News from Around the Islands...



The neighbor island EMS and first responder community immersed itself in safety legislation during the recently concluded 2004 Legislative session. **Scotty Paiva, Zach Octavio, Curt Morimoto, Captain Charles Hirata** of the Maui Police Department, and **AMR-Maui's Scotty Schaefer** got involved in drafting and submitting written testimony on behalf of the booster seat and helmet bills. Although both bills didn't pass this year, this core team, including Oahu's **Speedy Bailey**, Director of Operations, AMR-Hawaii, is already dedicated to next year's endeavors. All are welcome to join the effort!

Maui, Molokai & Lanai

Reporting in for Maui, **AMR's Curt Morimoto** recounts that Injury Prevention Coordinator **Christian Conradt** attended the Fourth Annual Teen Summit in Wailea and will collaborate on efforts that address what teens can and will do to prevent underage drinking. In the area of child passenger safety, certified AMR personnel continue to participate in monthly checkups at various locations on Maui.

Kauai

Zach Octavio, AMR-Kauai Manager, reports that his dedicated group of injury prevention supporters routinely participates in child passenger seat roadside checks with the Kauai Police Department (KPD). He and Moana Taa, Kauai Keiki Injury Prevention Coalition (KKIPC) Coordinator, will be meeting with the West Kauai Rotary Club to discuss the "Shattered Dreams" program and elicit their help in upcoming efforts at Waimea High School. Also, AMR's **Thomas VanderWende** coordinated a successful bike rodeo at Kilauea Elementary School. Partnering up with AMR was KPD, KKIPC, and the Kauai Fire Department.

Hawaii

It's been a busy first half of the year for the **Hawaii County Fire Department's (HCFD) EMS Division**. **Scotty Paiva**, EMS Battalion Chief, reports that in addition to participating in the Hawaii Heart Walk & Health Fair, the annual food drive, and the Hawaii County United Way Campaign, 75 HCFD personnel committed

themselves to a three-day certified child passenger safety technicians course in June. And in conjunction with EMS Week, HCFD held their Fourth Annual EMS 5K Family Run/Walk, which honored paramedics Mandy Shiraki and Danny Villiaros, and Hawaii Air Ambulance pilot Ron Laubacher. Several EMS personnel from around the state participated and dedicated their runs to the fallen heroes.

Oahu

The **City & County of Honolulu's EMS Division** participated in the HPD-sponsored "Partnering for a Safe Community" event in April at Windward Mall. Spearheading the effort was Administration's **Chris Bahasa**, with assistance from Paramedic **Sonya Austin**, and **Lisa Nakao**, C&C EMS Injury Prevention Coordinator. At the annual Washington Place Easter egg hunt, Paramedics **Jane Greenwood, Bobby Pedro**, and **Colin Wong** conducted safety demonstrations for the children and families present. And during an eventful 2004 EMS Week, Medical IDs and injury prevention information were the order of the day. Kudos go out to EMS personnel **Kelly Yamamoto, Jane Greenwood, Christine Ichinose**, and **Cortney Chambers**, and Administration's **Robin McCulloch, Vicki Bentzien, Cheryl Cudiamat, Peter Loui, Lisa Nakao**, and **Samantha Tanuvasa** for their commitment to safety during a week set to honor the crews who provide vital lifesaving services.

During HPD's most recent campaign, the **Honolulu Fire Department** participated in getting the message of "seat belts save lives" out to the community by displaying "Click It or Ticket" banners at 20 fire stations around Oahu. Thanks go out to **Fire Chief Attilio Leonardi** and to **Captain Tony Sung**, HFD Community Relations, for spearheading the effort.



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What do you get when you put City & County of Honolulu EMS personnel in a room with 100 high school seniors? No, not mass destruction, but mass INSTRUCTION! In an unprecedented volunteer effort, 43 of Honolulu's most dedicated EMS providers answered the call of Jessica Greenwood, a senior at Maryknoll. Jessica wanted her senior project to have a lasting impact and to send her classmates away with a life saving skill. Already

A Life Saving "Senior Moment"

CPR certified for five years, she ambitiously chose to conduct an American Heart Association Heartsaver/AED course for her graduating class. She broached the idea to her mother, paramedic Jane Greenwood. Given her background, Jane saw it as a worthwhile endeavor and offered guidance to Jessica.

After overcoming the obstacles of convincing her school board to approve her project and securing a location, Jessica credits EMSIP Chief Donna Maiava for the appropriation of funds. "It couldn't have been done without the support of state EMS," said Jessica, "and thanks also to Ocean Safety's Matt Miller for loaning us the needed equipment."

Not only did the effort certify 100 students in CPR, it also generated camaraderie and team spirit among the participating EMS providers. Furthermore, their involvement set an example for the students. "As a paramedic, I had the responsibility of imparting the importance of prevention and helping lay a foundation for their personal lives," said Sonya Austin. Added Jane, "these students are on the verge of becoming adults and they now have this life saving skill, a skill that many adults do not have, under their belts."

Both Greenwoods acknowledge these dedicated individuals:

Paramedics Jenna Altomare, David Daniels, Jeff

Zuckernick, Kelly Yamamoto, Kevin Stinson, Aaron Pitt, Chester Sukekane, Sonya Austin, John Kanaulu, David Mendonsa, Colleen Tanaka, Chris Ano, Yvette Kubota, Felimon Juliano, Tony Young, Dan Kuwahara, Ray Franco, Belinda Lee, Doreen Kitagawa, Don Takara, Mark Moriguchi, Keith Imada, and Brandon Shimamura.

EMTs Maile Lambeth, Kelly Garringer, Mark Mochida, Theresa McGregor, Jillian Takayama, Darcel Takushi, Noa Miyamoto, Tony Rossi, Ernest Alvarez, Byron Vance, Crysta Elkins, Jon Kurosu, Steven Lee, Scott Kirley, Crista Love, Kelly Desha, Denise Kameda, and Vince Conte.

Congratulations go out to Jessica for recognizing how you can make a difference and for successfully partnering with EMS on such a laudable effort!

EMS personnel and Maryknoll High School seniors show they have what it takes to save a life.

Directly below: Jane and Jessica Greenwood, energized and satisfied after a gratifying effort.

